

H. RES. 281

Resolved, That the following Member be and is hereby elected to the following standing committee of the House of Representatives:

Committee on the Budget: Mr. Chocoma.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Minnesota?

There was no objection.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

NAFTA LESSONS FOR CAFTA

(Ms. WOOLSEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, much like its elder cousin NAFTA, CAFTA has promised to raise the standard of living in its poorest member countries. But thanks to NAFTA, we already know how this story ends.

A typical Central American earns only a small fraction of an average American worker's wage. More than 40 percent of workers in the region labor for less than \$2 a day, placing them below the global poverty level.

Mexico now ranks as one of the world's 10 largest economies. Its overall wealth has increased since passing NAFTA, and, unfortunately, so has its poverty. It is said, "a rising tide lifts all boats." This is not the case for the poor in Mexico and will not be the case for the impoverished people in the Western hemisphere's poorest nations.

For this and other reasons, I encourage my colleagues to join me in opposing CAFTA.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mrs. MCCARTHY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mrs. MCCARTHY addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

SMART SECURITY AND HOMELAND SECURITY VS IRAQ'S SECURITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, minutes ago the House approved the fiscal year 2006 Homeland Security appropriation bill to the tune of, underwhelmingly, \$37 billion. In a vacuum, \$37 billion sounds like a lot of money, and it is, but when you consider that Congress has appropriated over \$100 billion on the security of Iraq this year alone,

and more than \$200 billion overall, \$37 billion sounds much less significant. In fact, the \$37 billion spending bill that was approved today represents less than 5 percent of the U.S. annual discretionary budget. Yet the Iraq war this year, this year alone, represents well over 10 percent of our annual discretionary budget.

Clearly, something is wrong with this picture. Spending on homeland security, while inadequate in its amount, focuses on the right things to protect America: First responders, border and port security, and cargo inspections. On the other hand, funding for the war in Iraq continues to focus on poorly planned military operations and irresponsible no-bid contracts to war profiteers like Halliburton and its subsidiary Kellogg, Brown & Root.

At the same time, the Iraq supplemental spending bill of over \$200 billion has neglected to provide adequate funds for body armor for the troops. This is a particularly egregious mistake in light of the 2004 study indicating as many as a quarter of all troop deaths could have been prevented if the most advanced body armor had been provided to every single soldier in Iraq.

It is important to note the irony in our funding priorities. The Homeland Security budget, which is vitally important towards ensuring the safety of the American people, is drastically underfunded. On the other hand, the Iraq war, which was a war of choice, not a war of necessity, is so overfunded that last year \$9 billion in reconstruction funds went missing. Nine billion dollars. That is more than a quarter of this year's homeland security budget.

And let us not forget another more recent report by the Special Inspector General for Iraq's reconstruction. This report states that another \$100 million for reconstruction projects in southern Iraq is also missing and cannot be accounted for.

Mr. Speaker, we need to focus our spending on programs and policies that will help ensure the safety of the American people. The war in Iraq will not make Americans safer, because this conflict is causing the United States to be perceived by the Muslim world as a colonial occupier, not as a liberating force. This perception, combined with our continued military presence in Iraq, has assisted radical Muslim terrorist groups like al Qaeda in their recruiting efforts. The result is that 3½ years after September 11 Americans are less safe.

Fortunately, there is a way to achieve sensible spending while also keeping America secure. Over the last 2 years, I have developed the SMART Security Strategy for the 21st Century. SMART is a sensible multilateral American response to terrorism. SMART Security urges a shifting of America's budget priorities to more effectively meet our national security needs. That means spending more money on port security, cargo inspec-

tions and airline security, and less money on warfare, outdated weapon systems, and new nuclear weapons.

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Instead of funding continued military operations in Iraq, the SMART platform would encourage other nations to work with the United States and spend more money on peacekeeping, on reconstruction and developmental aid to ensure long-term peace and stability in the Middle East.

In fact, it has been proven when debt relief increases, terrorism and the conditions that give rise to terrorism tend to decrease. That is why the SMART platform encourages wealthy nations to provide debt relief and developmental aid for the world's poorest countries. After more than 2 years of fighting, it is clear that the war in Iraq cannot be won through military means. We need to be smarter. We need to be smarter than the terrorists, not just bigger and stronger.

The fight to secure our country must be fought on more than the battlefield. We must be smart in the way we prioritize our national spending by focusing on true security needs instead of superficial security needs. Homeland security is a true security need. Let us remember the next time President Bush asks for money for Iraq, which I understand will be sometime this summer, we need to know which is secure and which is not.

COST OF PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KUHLMAN of New York). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. GUTKNECHT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GUTKNECHT. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to talk about the price of prescription drugs here in the United States compared to what consumers pay in other industrialized countries in the world.

I have some charts with me tonight because I want to point out some differences. There are several that I think are important. This is a chart, and some numbers are hard to read. These are 10 of the most commonly prescribed drugs in the United States. We have Nexium and Norvasc and Zyrtec and Zocor. I want to point out Zocor, we have a price, and these were all done just in the last few months. We have a price from the Metropolitan Pharmacy in Frankfurt, Germany and a local pharmacy in Rochester, Minnesota.

If we total all of these drugs for a month's supply, in Frankfurt, Germany, they would cost \$455.57 in U.S. dollars. Also in U.S. dollars in the United States, the price of those same drugs, those same 10 best-selling prescription drugs would be \$1,040.04. Over the last year, the value of the dollar has declined by about 20 percent. We thought the differences we pay in the United States and what our German friends pay would have gotten less. We